

□ ***Bill includes funding for pay raise and equipment for troops***

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WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio voted yesterday in favor of the fiscal year 2007 Defense Appropriations Act.

The bill includes a 2.2 percent pay raise for troops and billions in funding for body armor, armored vehicles, and roadside bomb jammers. Overall, the bill was funded at \$500 million above what President Bush requested in order to ensure the National Guard has the equipment it needs.

“While the bill included several provisions I did not support-like \$9 billion for the failed Star Wars program, which does nothing to protect us from the threat of nuclear weapons smuggled through our ports, and funding for three virtually identical fighter jet programs-it also included vital funding for our troops,” DeFazio said. “The funding in this bill helps ensure that our men and women in uniform have the equipment they need to do their jobs.”

DeFazio also joined Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) in offering an amendment to the Defense Appropriations bill that would ensure that the president could not launch military strikes against Iran without a vote in Congress. The amendment failed.

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution requires the president to get authorization from Congress before taking military action.

“The amendment I supported would ensure that before the president takes any military action against Iran, he must first get authorization from Congress,” DeFazio said. “Members of the House of Representatives have been elected by their constituents to participate in major decisions like initiating military strikes against other countries, and it is an injustice to the American people to deny them that prerogative. Congress must get some backbone and defend the Constitution.”

"Republicans in Congress rushed to defend the Constitution and the separation of powers after the FBI raided the office of a member of Congress, but they're willing to abdicate their constitutional responsibilities on the most grave matter of sending our men and women into war. Congress needs to stand up for its constitutional responsibilities, and not just when its own members will benefit."